



Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.

The people of The United Methodist Church™

Officemaderaumc@gmail.com

The Grapevine

500 Sunset, Madera CA 93637 -

(559) 674-8704

July 2025

Sunday Morning Schedule:

10:00 am: Worship

Office Hours:

9:00 am - 12:00 pm Tuesday-Friday

Phone: 559-674-8704

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July 2025

From the Pastor

This year marks my fortieth year in pastoral ministry. The congregation recently held a lovely surprise event recognizing that milestone. In 1985, after four years at Fresno State and three years at Asbury Seminary, at the fresh age of 25 and one year into marriage, Kathy and I went to serve the United Methodist Church in Gage, Oklahoma, a town of 500 at the beginning of the panhandle. We served in three states and eleven churches since then and are happy now to be at Madera UMC.

Looking back at old photos I am thankful for the privilege of being part of the lives and faith of so many wonderful people over the years. I have baptized infants as their parents and the congregation committed to raising them in the faith. I have baptized adults whose eyes shone with the joy of being born-again. I have held the hand of saints while they passed out of this life into the realms of glory. I have felt God's peace hold up the grieving. I have prayed with folks through all kinds of difficulties and illnesses. I have visited members in homes, hospitals and jails. We have fed the hungry and worshipped with the homeless. We have played and prayed with children at VBS and youth camps and youth groups.

We have studied the Bible with seasoned saints and brand-new believers. The church sent me on a mission trip to Bolivia where we built a home for folks involved with Heifer Project. There have been countless sermons, worship services, weddings, funerals, chatting in coffee hour, church meetings, building repairs, potlucks, and holiday services.

Through it all I am most grateful for the people, dear people deeply loved by God. My favorite part is getting to be part of the process where folks discover that they are loved by God, accepted by grace, and part of the family. Sometimes it is a slow process, but on occasion I have seen the light bulb click on in an “aha” moment. What a privilege it has been to see that joy. As a pastor I often get the up-close view of those moments of spiritual transformation, but it is the ministry of the whole church that makes it happen. Praise God that he invites us all to join in his amazing work.

Yours in Jesus,



Pastor Jim

A Heartfelt Thank You From Pastor Jim

I would like to thank everyone who participated in the (almost) surprise celebration of my fortieth year in pastoral ministry. Good food, good memories and many good wishes made the occasion a great success. I was surprised by family, members

of former churches, and clergy colleagues who were able to attend. We also received a generous gift. Thank you so much for your thoughtful appreciation.

Committee Spotlight – SPRC

Staff-Parish Relations Committee, using the acronym SPRC, works closely with the pastor and staff concerning their relationship with the congregation and the entire work of the church. This committee serves, in essence, as the personnel committee of pastoral charge.

The key word for SPRC is “relations.” SPRC focuses on building a strong relationship between the staff and the congregation, and between the congregation and the district superintendent so that the mission of the church moves forward. As well, this committee works with the pastor and staff to fulfill legal and ethical responsibilities related to the staff. It is important for SPRC to strike a balance between building relationships and handling administrative tasks. The committee must maintain confidentiality and members should be good listeners and keep a focus on the mission of the church.

The committee is sensitive to the opinions and concerns of the congregation regarding the pastor and staff. SPRC confers with the district superintendent or the bishop concerning the appointment of the pastor for the church. The committee recommends the salary for the pastor at the Charge Conference.

In order to keep things simple and organized, Madera UMC SPRC designates a single committee member as liaison for the pastor and for each staff member. This liaison checks in with the staffer at least quarterly and deals with any issues staff may have as well as an issue a parishioner might have with a staff member. Anyone within the congregation with an issue or praise is asked to seek out the liaison, not the staff person, with their item. Candy Talley is the incoming chair replacing Martha Mossman who resigned following her Dos Palos appointment.

“Our Staff-Parish Relations Committee is a group of church members who help support both our staff and congregation. This team works together to make sure everything is running smoothly to support the well-being of our staff, address any concerns, and help foster healthy communication within the church community,” comments Candy. “If there’s something you’d like to share or talk about, feel free to reach out to any one of us. We’re always happy to hear from you!” SPRC meets on the 4th Wednesday of each month at 5:30 pm in the Conference Room. Committee members include Nancy Sherrod, Debbie Valencia, Gordon Kennedy, Bobby Carter, Paul Brack, Mary Long and Vivian Chicconi.

Know Your Church Family

Sorry, there is no profile this month! We hope you enjoy getting to know your fellow parishioners and we look forward to sharing another profile in August.

Blessing Bags

The summer distribution of Blessing Bags will be on July 26th with the goal of assembling 150 bags. The bags include deodorant, tissues, lip balm, sunglasses, sunblock, shaving kits, lotions, and dog and cat food if available. The filled drawstring bags are distributed during a Saturday meal at the Holy Family Table. The congregation has been generous in their donations toward this undertaking for the less fortunate in our community as the cost is about \$800. Donations are still being accepted and should be marked “Blessing Bag Donation.” MUMC youth hand out the bags.

Other Missions Committee Outreach

In addition to the July Blessing Bags distribution, Missions is working with the local representative of The Gideons International on evangelism training in fall. The tentative date set for another John Nilsen Piano Concert is August 1st. A second annual Salad Bar Luncheon is being planned and baked potatoes will be added to this year’s menu with a target date for the lunch being mid to late August.

And, of course, plans are well underway for the Fall Festival in September. Heifer Sunday will also be in September, and October will be the annual Trunk or Treat. In November, Missions will host the 4th Sunday Lunch to benefit the winter Blessing Bags distribution and is discussing hosting an old-fashioned turkey dinner! This year Missions will modify the December Progressive Dinner into a

potluck still incorporating the much enjoyed caroling. And we're hoping to continue hosting the Early Start Giving Tree benefiting families of the Gould Center.

The goal of the Missions events and activities is, of course, evangelism and sharing the Christian message and ultimately to bring in members. The District Superintendent challenged MUMC to bring in 10 new members in 2025 and so far we have welcomed one. If you are interested in joining MUMC or know someone who is looking to join, please talk to Pastor Jim.

Central Valley District Rally

On Saturday July 19th Madera UMC will host the churches in the Central Valley District for a Rally to include music and song, prayer and, of course, a potluck! DS Mary Maaga will provide a State of the District address as well as a celebration of those individuals newly serving and those retiring from the District or leaving to serve elsewhere. Please plan to attend this day of celebration!

Finance Committee Update

All we have comes from God. He is very generous in his blessings. One of the many ways we can show our gratitude to God, is through our giving back a portion of what he has given us.

Tithing, the practice of giving 10% of your income, is a Biblical concept, which started thousands of years ago. We first read about it

early in the Old Testament. Abraham and Jacob offered tithes to God, and Moses established the tithe as a law, requiring the Israelites to give 10% of their herds and flocks to God. (Leviticus 27:30-34)

Today, most of us do not have herds and flocks, but we earn an income. The Bible teaches us that tithing is an important part of faith for those who follow God. We have many tithers in our congregation. The contributions received from our church family are used to continue our ministry. Thank you to those of you who are faithful in your giving. The figures below represent only the operational income and expenses, and not funds designated for specific purposes.

For the month of May 2025:

Total Income	\$ 18,336.59
Total Expenses	<u>22,919.29</u>
Net Income (loss)	\$ (4,582.70)

For the year 2025:

Total Income	\$105,499.64
Total Expenses	<u>115,617.63</u>
Net Income (loss)	\$ (10,117.99)

5/31/25 General Fund Balance	\$104,439.67
5/31/25 Restricted Fund Balance	\$ 66,818.48
5/31/25 Endowment Fund Balance	\$ 99,882.64

Our church also pays tithes to our conference, and we remain faithful in our giving. Thank you for your prayers and your contributions to the church.

Nancy Simpson, Treasurer

4th Sunday Lunch

David and Nancy Simpson will host the July 27th lunch, which will feature chicken and salad with the proceeds benefiting Prayer Group. This group of dedicated prayer warriors meets every Monday at 6:45 am in the Conference Room and is responsible for cards being sent to those on our prayer list. The charge for lunch is by donation only and the proceeds will be used to offset the cost of cards and ever-increasing postage. Please join us for lunch and support the work being done by this awesome group!

Trustees Report

The change was made from heat to air conditioning, and the thermostats have all been adjusted accordingly. The classroom doors have been painted. They are all now blue, except for the childcare classroom, which remains yellow. A big “thank you” to Dianna and Robert Combs for joining Bobby Carter in sanding, prepping and painting.

The new interior signage has been installed (check out the top of each doorframe as you leave or enter a room). These should assist visitors or guests when navigating our facility. “Thank you” to Bert Roper for working on this project. Trustees continue to work to solve our irrigation problem; David Simpson has been working with various contractors to attempt to make needed repairs.

We are in the process of a complete remodel of the restroom in the Fireside Room,

including widening the doors to accommodate a wheelchair. The labor for this project is being provided by Fred Mossman, David Simpson, Mike Chicconi, Bert Roper and Bobby Carter. We hope to have it completed within the next two weeks. We appreciate your understanding while construction is underway. The next regular meeting of Trustees is scheduled for July 1, 2025, at 5:00 pm in the Conference Room. All are invited to attend.

Bobby Carter, Chair

Heart of California Book Faire

On August 23rd Madera UMC will be the site of the Friends of Madera County Library Heart of California Book Faire. The event will feature author discussion panels, author readings and, of course, book selling. The goal is to bring readers to the event from all over Central California and it will be right here in our Church! Our location affords attendees a chance to get to know the authors up close and personal and listen to passages from select books. Interested authors and illustrators can register on the Friends website. All others are encouraged to mark your calendar to attend what is guaranteed to be a great event for authors and readers.

Grapevine Mailing

With the cost of postage rising again, MUMC hopes to cut newsletter mailing fees. The Grapevine is sent out electronically on the 1st of each month and if this option is one you can



select or you can convert it to online reading, please call the office at 559-674-8704 so we can take you off the mailing list. This will save us over \$1 per newsletter, and we mail about 40 per month so the cost adds up. Thank you for considering this cost-saving option to benefit your church!

Methodist Dine Out

This awesome event is consistently organized by Bobby & Alice Carter and is a fun and worthwhile endeavor of food and fellowship as well as giving back to the community. Each month the Carters choose a different Madera area restaurant who can accommodate about 40 people on what might be an otherwise slow night for the eatery. Everyone pays for their own meal, but it is a great way to interact with church members and friends as well as help a local restaurant. Plan to attend and enjoy!

July Birthdays

7/ 6 Mary Ann Crosson
 7/ 8 Jennifer Martinez
 Terri Martinez
 Leon Potter
 7/ 9 Stephanie Janzen
 7/12 Doug Potter
 7/15 Brent Westcott
 Paul Lewis
 Craig Flowers
 7/17 Christine Janzen
 7/22 Sue First
 7/24 Paige Jones
 7/26 Katie Otstot
 7/29 Nanci Conley
 7/30 Keith Rash

July Wedding Anniversaries

7/16 Greg & Rosalie Robinson
 7/25 Kevin & Nancy Sherrod

If your Birthday or Anniversary is incorrect or is not listed, please call the church office so we can update our records.

Greeters

7/ 6 Pat Galleano
 7/13 Dianna Combs & Natalie
 7/20 Alice & Bobby Carter
 7/27 Nancy & Kevin Sherrod

Coffee Hour Host/Hostesses

7/ 6 Dianna Combs
 7/13 Julie & Craig Flowers
 7/20 Nancy & Kevin Sherrod
 7/27 4th Sunday Lunch – Nancy & David Simpson

AV Team Assignments

7/ 6 Sue & Tiffany
 7/13 Crystal & Eric
 7/20 Sue & Tiffany
 7/27 Dianna & Doug

Online Giving

This online giving portal may be accessed through our website at maderaumc.org. At the Top of the opening page, there is a red "Donate" button, which will take you to our Online Giving site. There you will find various options.

You may also use our QR Code that will take you directly to our Online Giving site. Just open your phone camera and hover it over the QR Code. Then touch the pop-up that appears.



July 25, 2025 @ 12:00 noon
Please send Articles for the
Grapevine by this date.

Remembering your church in your estate

We all have something to pass on to others when we leave this world, and whether you are a young person or an older adult, you need to think about how you want to distribute what you have so that others can benefit. We don't know when our final moment will come, so it is never too soon to make those plans.

Your church can be a beneficiary of your estate or a life insurance policy. If you have not already done so, consider naming Madera United Methodist Church as a beneficiary.

Sometimes churches receive property, such as land or a building, a vehicle, or other tangible asset. This is often difficult for a church to accept. Although the donor may think it is thoughtful and generous, it sometimes causes more issues than benefits. Monetary giving is usually more beneficial for the church.

That said, our building is in constant need of attention. If you are planning to give to the church as a beneficiary, you might consider designating some of your giving to the Building Maintenance Fund.



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<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
		1 9:00 am Small Group (CR) 5:00 pm Trustees (CR)	2	3 6:30 am Bible Study (Perko's) 9:00 am Crafts (CR)	4 7:00 am TOPS (CR)	5
6 10:00 am Worship Service Communion	7 6:45 am Prayer Group (CR) 9:00 am Crafts (CR) 4:00 pm Small Group (Cedar) 7:00 pm Scouts (SH/CR)	8 9:00 am Small Group (CR)	9 5:30 pm Nurture & Care (CR)	10 6:30 am Bible Study (Perko's) 9:00 am Crafts (CR)	11 7:00 am TOPS (CR)	12
13 10:00 am Worship Service	14 6:45 am Prayer Group (CR) 9:00 am Crafts (CR) 4:00 pm (Cedar) Small Group 6:00 pm Finance (CR) 7:00 pm Scouts (SH-CR)	15 9:00 am Small Group (CR) 5:00 pm Missions (FR) 6:00 pm Council (CR)	16	17 6:30 am Bible Study (Perko's) 9:00 am Crafts (CR)	18 7:00 am TOPS (CR)	19 UMW 9:30 am (FR) (Dark for July)
20 10:00 am Worship Service	21 6:45 am Prayer Group (CR) 9:00 am Crafts (CR) 4:00 pm Small Group (Cedar) 7:00 pm Scouts (SH-CR)	22 9:00 am Small Group (CR)	23 SPRC 5:30 pm (CR)	24 6:30 am Bible Study (Perko's) 9:00 am Crafts (CR) 9:00am 55+ Food Distribution (PL)	25 7:00 am TOPS (CR)	26
27 10:00 am Worship Service 4 th Sunday Lunch	28 6:45 am Prayer Group (CR) 9:00 am Crafts (CR) 4:00 pm Small Group (Cedar) 7:00 pm Scouts (SH-CR)	29 9:00 am Small Group (CR) Facility Rented – Faith Tabernacle	30 9:00 am Food Distribution (PL) Facility Rented – Faith Tabernacle	31 6:30 am Bible Study (Perko's) 9:00 am Crafts (CR) Facility Rented – Faith Tabernacle		8